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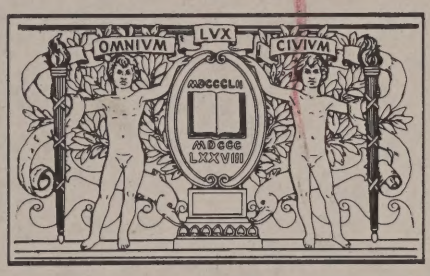

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ROBERT T. KENNEY
DIRECTOR

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE JUNE 6, 1974

BRA Director Robert T. Kenney today announced a 10-point program of physical improvements designed to upgrade and preserve downtown Boston's entertainment district.

Kenney said the first project to be undertaken would be construction this summer of the Liberty Tree Park, on the corner of Boylston and Essex Street, where the Liberty Tree once stood.

Kenney suggested that construction of the park would provide an opportunity to change the image of the entertainment area. He proposed that the name of the park might be a more appropriate term to identify the adult entertainment district than the commonly used "Combat Zone."

"Combat Zone is a misnomer," he said. "That term is a disservice to the many fine restaurants, legitimate theatres and first-run movie houses in that area."

Kenney said, "We think Liberty Tree has the potential to be a lively and vital part of Boston's downtown. Our program

-more-

of improvements will help it become an area similar to Piccadilly Circus and Soho in London, Tivoli in Copenhagen and North Beach in San Francisco, all of which are areas where people can find the kind of entertainment they want.

"As the city's planning agency," he said, "we do not want to make moral judgements on the type of entertainment people prefer. However, we do think there is a need for us to take public actions which will help make the area more attractive for residents of the city and visitors."

Kenney said he would recommend that the BRA Board send on to the Zoning Commission an amendment to the Zoning Code that would create an Adult Entertainment Zone in downtown Boston.

Containing a majority of the adult entertainment facilities for the city in this compact area would prevent their spread to other parts of the city, Kenney said.

At the same time, he went on, the zone could be avoided by persons who do not care to be subjected to entertainment of this kind.

The action program, as outlined by Kenney, contained the following steps:

ACTION PROGRAM

- Creation of an Adult Entertainment Zone within the Boston Zoning Code.

- Liberty Tree Park -- to be constructed as part of the Boylston-Essex Urban Renewal Project; completion set for November 1974.

- Theatre Square Park -- This space, to be created by the demolition of the existing buildings on Tremont and Stuart Streets, will be designed as a special "theme" park for the theatre district.

- Sign Control -- As a supplement to this report there is a building-by-building description of the specific changes in the existing signs and minor modifications of facades to be negotiated with each building owner within the sign control zones.

- Rehabilitation of the existing buildings -- Rehabilitation standards and reuse objectives for the three areas along Washington Street, to be undertaken through private enterprise.

- Maintained cleanliness of the private alleys within the Study Area.

- A pedestrian link between Tremont and Warrenton Streets connecting the Charles Playhouse with the Tufts parking garage.

- New street lighting -- First priority will be given to Tremont Street between the Boylston MBTA kiosks and the legitimate theatres south of Stuart Street. The area within the South Cove Project along Tremont Street is scheduled for Fall 1974.

- Sidewalk and street repaving and repairs -- First priority for sidewalk repairs will be given to Tremont and Washington Streets - the areas most heavily used by pedestrians walking to the Entertainment District.

- Shuttle bus to tie together the parking facilities, entertainment enterprises, MBTA stops, and Boston Center for the Arts - scheduled for 1975.

-end-

Action Program

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